



M.^{rs} Billington as Patty.

THE
MAID OF THE MILL.

A COMIC OPERA.

WRITTEN BY

ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

TAKEN FROM

THE MANAGERS' BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

L O N D O N:

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.
COVENT GARDEN.

M E N.

Lord Aimworth	—	Mr. Johnstone.
Sir Harry Sycamore	—	Mr. Quick.
Mervin	—	Mr. Davies.
Fairfield	—	Mr. Hull.
Giles	—	Mr. Bannister.
Ralph	—	Mr. Edwin.

W O M E N.

Lady Sycamore	—	Mrs. Pitt.
Theodosia	—	Mrs. Morton.
Patty	—	Mrs. Billington.
Fanny	—	Mrs. Martyr.



THE MAID OF THE MILL.

ACT I.

SCENE *a rural prospect, with a mill at work. Several people employed about it; on one side a house, PATTY reading in the window; on the other a barn, where FANNY sits mending a net; GILES appears at a distance in the mill; FAIRFIELD and RALPH taking sacks from a cart.*

CHORUS of Gypsies.

FREE from sorrow, free from strife,
O how blest the miller's life!
Chearful working through the day,
Still he laughs and sings away.

Nought can vex him,
Nought perplex him,
While there's grist to make him gay.

D U E T.

Let the great enjoy the blessings
By indulgent fortune sent:
What can wealth, can grandeur offer
More than plenty and content?

Fairf. Well done, well done! 'tis a sure sign work goes on merrily when folks sing at it. Stop the mill there; and dost hear, son Ralph, hoist yon sacks of flour upon this cart, lad, and drive it up to Lord Aimworth's. Coming from London last night with strange company, no doubt there are calls enough for it by this time.

Ralph. Ay seyther, whether or not there's no doubt but you'll find enough for a body to do.

Fairf. What dost mutter? Is't not a strange plague that thou can'st never go about any thing with a good will! murrain take it, what's come o'er the boy? So then thou wilt not set a hand to what I have desired thee!

Ralph. Why don't you speak to suster Pat to do something then? I thought when she came home to us after my old lady's death, she was to have been of some use in the house; but instead of that, she sits there all day, reading outlandish books, dressed like a fine madumafel, and the never a word you says to she.

Fairf. Sirrah, don't speak so disrespectfully of thy sister; thou wilt never have the tyth of her deserts.

Ralph. Why I'll read and write with her for what she dares; and as for playing on the hapticols, I thinks her rich good mother might have learn'd her something more properer, seeing she did not remember to leave her a legacy at last.

Fairf. That's none of thy business, sirrah.

Ralph. A farmer's wife painting pictures, and playing on the hapticols; why I'll be hang'd now, for all as old as she is, if she knows any more about milking a cow, than I do of sewing a petticoat.

Fairf. Ralph, thou hast been drinking this morning.

Ralph. Well, if so be as I have, it's nothing out of your pocket, nor mines neither.

Fairf. Who has been giving thee liquor, sirrah?

Ralph. Why it was wind—a gentleman gave me.

Fairf. A gentleman!

Ralph. Yes, a gentleman that's come piping hot from London: he is below at the Cat and Bagpipes; I cod he rides a choice bit of a nag; I dare to say she'd fetch as good as forty pound at ever a fair in all England.

Fairf. A fig's end for what she'd fecch; mind thy business, or by the lord Harry——

Ralph. Why I won't do another hand's turn to-day now; so that's flat.

Fairf. Thou wilt not——

Ralph. Why no, I won't; so what argues your putting yourself in a passion, feyther! I've promised to go back to the gentleman; and I don't know but what he's a lord too, and mayhap he may do more for me than you thinks of.

Fairf. Well, son Ralph, run thy gait; but remember I tell thee, thou will repent this untowardness.

Ralph. Why, how shall I repent it? Mayhap you'll turn me out of your service; a match; with all hearts—Iced I don't care three brass pins.

A I R.

If that's all you want, who the plague will be sorry,
'Twere better by half to dig stones in a quarry;

For my share I'm weary of what is got by't:

S'flsh! here's such a racket, such scolding and coiling,
You're never content, but when folks are a toiling,
And drudging like horses from morning till night.

You

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You think I'm afraid ; but the diff'rence to shew you ;
First, yonder's your shovel ; your sacks too I throw you ;
Henceforward take care of your matters who will ;
They're welcome to slave for your wages who need 'em,
Tol lol derol lol, I have purchas'd my freedom,
And never hereafter shall work at the mill. [Exit.

Fairf. Dear heart, dear heart ! I protest this ungracious boy puts me quite beside myself. Patty, my dear, come down into the yard a little, and keep me company—and you, thieves, vagabonds, gypsies, out here ; 'tis you debauch my son. [Exit Gypsies,

Enter Patty. A I R.

Patty. In love to pine and languish,
Yet know your passion vain ;
To harbour heart-felt anguish,
Yet fear to tell your pain.
What powers unrelenting,
Severer ills inventing,
Can sharpen pangs like these ;
Where days and nights, tormenting,
Yield not a moment's ease !

Fairf. Well Patty, Master Goodman, my lord's steward, has been with me just now, and I find we are like to have great doings ; his lordship has brought down Sir Harry Sycamore and his family, and there is more company expected in a few days.

Patty. I know Sir Harry very well, he is by marriage a distant relation of my lord's.

Fairf. Pray what sort of a young body is the daughter there ? I think she used to be with you at the castle, three or four summers ago, when my young lord was out upon his travels.

Patty. Oh ! very often ; she was a great favourite of my lady's : pray father is she come down ?

Fairf. Why you know the report last night, about my lord's going to be married ; by what I can learn she is, and there is likely to be a nearer relationship between the families, ere long. It seems, his lordship was not ever willing for the match, but the friends on both sides in London pressed it so hard : then there's a swingeing fortune ; master Goodman tells me a matter of twenty or thirty thousand pounds.

Patty. If it was a million, father, it would not be more
B than

than my Lord Aimworth deserves; I suppose the wedding will be celebrated here at the mansion-house.

Fairf. So it is thought, as soon as things can be properly prepared——And now, Patty, if I could but see thee a little merry—Come, bless thee, piuck up thy spirits—To be sure thou hast sustained, in the death of thy lady, a heavy loss; she was a parent to thee; nay, and better, inasmuch as she took thee when thou wert but a babe, and gave thee an education which thy natural parents could not afford to do.

Patty. Ah! dear father, don't mention what, perhaps, has been my greatest misfortune.

Fairf. Nay then, Patty, what's become of all thy sense, that people talk so much about?——But I have something to say to thee which I would have thee consider seriously.——I believe I need not tell thee, my child, that a young maiden, after she is marriageable, especially if she has any thing about her to draw people's notice, is liable to ill tongues, and a many cross accidents; so that the sooner she's out of harm's way the better.

Patty. Undoubtedly, father, there are people enough who watch every opportunity to gratify their own malice; but when a young woman's conduct is unblameable——

Fairf. Why, Patty, there may be something in that; but you know slander will leave spots, where malice finds none: I say, then, a young woman's best safeguard is a good husband. Now there is our neighbour, Farmer Giles; he is a sober, honest, industrious young fellow, and one of the wealthiest in these parts; he is greatly taken with thee; and it is not the first time I have told thee I should be glad to have him for a son-in-law.

Patty. And I have told you as often, father, I would submit myself entirely to your direction; whatever you think proper for me, is so.

Fairf. Why that's spoken like a dutiful, sensible girl; get thee in, then, and leave me to manage it—— Perhaps our neighbour Giles is not a gentleman; but what are the greatest part of our country gentlemen good for?

Patty. Very true, father. The sentiments, indeed, have frequently little correspondence with the condition; and it is according to them alone we ought to regulate our esteem.

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A I R.

What are outward forms, and shews,
To an honest heart compar'd?
Oft the rustic, wanting those,
Has the nobler portion shar'd.

Oft we see the homely flower,
Bearing at the hedge's side,
Virtues of more sov'reign pow'r
Than the garden's gayest pride.

[Exit.

Enter Giles.

Giles. Well, master Fairfield, you and Miss Pat have had a long discourse together; did you tell her that I was come down?

Fairf. No, in truth, friend Giles; but I mentioned our affair at a distance; and I think there is no fear.

Giles. That's right—and when shall us—You do know I have told you my mind often and often.

Fairf. Farmer, give us thy hand; nobody doubts thy good-will to me and my girl; and you may take my word, I would rather give her to thee than another; for I am main certain thou wilt make her a good husband.

Giles. Thanks to your kind opinion, master Fairfield; if such be my hap, I hope there will be no cause of complaint.

Fairf. And I promise thee my daughter will make thee a choice wife. But thou know'st, friend Giles, that I, and all belongs to me, have great obligations to Lord Aimworth's family; Patty, in particular, would be one of the most ungrateful wretches this day breathing if she was to do the smallest thing contrary to their consent and approbation.

Giles. Nay, nay, 'tis well enough known to all the country, she was the old lady's darling.

Fairf. Well, master Giles, I'll assure thee she is not one whit less obliged to my lord himself. When his mother was taken off so suddenly, and his affairs called him up to London, if Patty would have remained at the castle, she might have had the command of all; or if she would have gone any where else, he would have paid for her fixing, let the cost be what it would.

Giles. Why, for that matter, folks did not spare to say, that my lord had a sort of a sneaking kindness for her himself: and I remember, at one time, it was rise all about the neighbourhood, that she was actually to be our lady.

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Fairf.

THE MAID OF

Fairf. Pho, pho! a pack of women's tales.

Giles. Nay, to be sure they'll say any thing.

Fairf. My lord's a man of a better way of thinking, friend Giles—But this is neither here nor there to our business—Have you been at the castle yet?

Giles. Who I! Bless your heart, I did not hear a syllable of his lordship's being come down, 'till your lad told me.

Fairf. No! why then go up to my lord, let him know you have a mind to make a match with my daughter; hear what he has to say to it; and afterwards we will try if we can't settle matters.

Giles. Go up to my lord! I cod if that be all, I'll do it with the biggest pleasure in life.—But where's Miss Pat? Might not one ax her how she do?

Fairf. Never spare it; she's within there.

Giles. I sees her—odd rabbit it, this hatch is locked now——Miss Pat——Miss Patty—She makes believe not to hear me.

Fairf. Well, well, never mind; thoul't come and eat a morsel of dinner with us.

Giles. Nay, but just to have a bit of joke with her at present—Miss Pat, I say—won't you open the door?

A I R.

Hark! 'tis I, your own true lover,
After walk'ng three long miles,
One kind look at least discover,
Come and speak a word to Giles.

You alone my heart I fix on:

Ah! you little cunning vixen!

I can see your roguish smiles.

Addlids! my mind is so possess'd,

Ti'l we're sped, I shan't have rest;

Only say the thing's a bargain,

Here an you like it,

Ready to strike it,

There's at once an end of arguing:

I'm her's, she's mine;

Thus we seal, and thus we sign.

[Exit.]

Enter Patty.

Fairf. Patty, child, why would'st not thou open the door for our neighbour Giles?

Patty. Really, father, I did not know what was the matter.

Fairf.

Fairf. Well, another time ; he'll be here again presently. He's gone up to the castle, Patty ; thou know'st it would not be right for us to do any thing without giving his lordship intelligence, so I have sent the farmer to let him know that he is willing, and we are willing ; and, with his lordship's approbation——

Patty. Oh dear father—what are you going to say ?

Fairf. Nay, child, I would not have stirr'd a step for fifty pounds, without advertising his lordship before hand.

Patty. But surely, surely, you have not done this rash, this precipitate thing.

Fairf. How rash, how is it rash, Patty ? I don't understand thee.

Patty. Oh, you have distress'd me beyond imagination, but why would you not give me notice—speak to me first ?

Fairf. Why han't I spoken to thee an hundred times ? No, Patty, 'tis thou that would'st distress me, and thou'lt break my heart.

Patty. Dear father !

Fairf. All I desire is to see thee well settled ; and now that I am likely to do so, thou art not contented ; I am sure the farmer is as slightly a clever lad as any in the country ; and is he not as good as we ?

Patty. 'Tis very true, father ; I am to blame ; pray forgive me.

Fairf. Forgive thee ! Lord help thee, my child, I am not angry with thee ; but quiet thyself, Patty, and thou'lt see all this will turn out for the best. [Exit.

Patty. What will become of me ? my lord will certainly imagine this is done with my consent——Well, is he not himself going to be married to a lady, suitable to him in rank, suitable to him in fortune, as this farmer is to me ; and under what pretence can I refuse the husband my father has found for me ? Shall I say that I have dared to raise my inclinations above my condition, and presumed to love, where my duty taught me only gratitude and respect ? Alas ! who could live in the house with Lord Aimworth, see him, converse with him, and not love him ! I have this consolation, however, my folly is yet undiscover'd to any ; else, how should I be ridiculed and despised ; nay, would not my lord himself despise me, especially, if he knew that I have more than once construed his natural affability and politeness into sentiments as unworthy of him, as mine are bold and extravagant. Unexampled vanity ! did I possess any thing

to

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capable of attracting such a notice, to what purpose could a man of his distinction cast his eyes on a girl, poor, meanly born, and indebted for every thing to the ill-placed bounty of his family?

A I R.

Ah! why should fate, pursuing

A wretched thing like me,

Heap ruin thus on ruin,

And add to misery?

The griefs I languish'd under,

In secret let me share;

But this new stroke of thunder,

Is more than I can bear.

[Exit.]

SCENE, a Chamber in Lord Aimworth's House.

Enter Sir Harry Sycamore and Theodosia.

Sir Har. Well, but Theodosia, child, you are quite unreasonable.

Theo. Pardon me, papa, it is not I am unreasonable: when I gave way to my inclinations for Mr. Mervin, he did not seem less agreeable to you and my mama, than he was acceptable to me. It is therefore you have been unreasonable, in first encouraging his addresses, and afterwards forbidding him your house; in order to bring me down here, to force me on a gentleman——

Sir Har. Force you, Dossy, what do you mean? By the la, I would not force you on the Czar of Muscovy.

Theo. And yet, papa, what else can I call it? for tho' Lord Aimworth is extremely attentive and obliging, I assure you he is by no means one of the most ardent of lovers.

Sir Har. Ardent, ah! there it is; you girls never think there is any love, without kissing and hugging; but you should consider, child, my Lord Aimworth is a polite man, and has been abroad in France and Italy, where these things are not the fashion; I remember, when I was on my travels, among the madames and signoras, we never saluted more than the tip of the ear.

Theo. Really, papa, you have a very strange opinion of my delicacy; I had no such stuff in my thoughts.

Sir Har. Well, come, my poor Dossy, I see you are chagrin'd, but you know it is not my fault; on the contrary, I assure you, I had always a great regard for young Mervin, and should have been very glad——

Theo. How then, papa, could you join in forcing me to write him that strange letter, never to see me more;

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or how indeed could I comply with your commands? what must he think of me?

Sir Har. Ay, but hold; Dossy, your mama convinced me that he was not so proper a son-in-law for us as Lord Aimworth.

Theo. Convinced you! Ah, my dear papa, you were not convinced.

Sir Har. What don't I know when I am convinced?

Theo. Why no, papa; because your good-nature and easiness of temper is such, that you pay more respect to the judgment of mama, and less to your own, than you ought to do.

Sir Har. Well, but Dossy, don't you see how your mama loves me; if my finger does but ach, she's like a bewitched woman; and if I was to die, I don't believe she would outlive the burying of me: nay, she has told me as much herself.

Theo. Her fondness indeed is very extraordinary.

Sir Har. Besides, could you give up the prospect of being a countess, and mistress of this fine place?

Theo. Yes, truly could I.

A I R.

With the man that I love, was I destin'd to dwell,
On a mountain, a moor, in a cot, in a cell,
Retreats the most barren, most desert, would be
More pleasing than courts or a palace to me.

Let the vain and the venal, in wedlock aspire
To what folly esteems, and the vulgar admire;
I yield them the bliss, where their wishes are plac'd,
Insensible creatures! 'tis all they can taste.

Enter Lady Sycamore.

La. Syc. Sir Harry, where are you?

Sir Har. Here, my lamb.

La. Syc. I am just come from looking over his lordship's family trinkets — Well, Miss Sycamore, you are a happy creature, to have diamonds, equipage, title, all the blessings of life poured thus upon you at once.

Theo. Blessings, madam! do you think then I am such a wretch as to place my felicity in the possession of any such trumpery?

La. Syc. Upon my word, Miss, you have a very disdainful manner of expressing yourself; I believe there are very few young women of fashion, who would think
any

any sacrifice they could make, too much for them.—Did you ever hear the like of her, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Why, my dear, I have just been talking to her in the same strain, but whatever she has got in her head——

La. Syc. Oh, it is Mr. Mervin, her gentleman of Eucklersbury.—Fye Miss, marry a cit! Where is your pride, your vanity; have you nothing of the person of distinction about you?

Sir Har. Well, but my Lady, you know I am a piece of a cit myself, as I may say, for my great-grandfather was a dry-falter.

Theo. And yet, madam, you condescended to marry my papa.

La. Syc. Well, if I did, Miss, I had but five thousand pounds to my portion, and Sir Harry knows I was past eight and thirty, before I would listen to him.

Sir Har. Nay, Dossy, that's true, your mama own'd eight and thirty, before we were married; but by the la, my dear, you were a lovely angel; and by candle-light nobody would have taken you for above five and twenty.

La. Syc. Sir Harry, you remember the last time I was at my lord duke's?

Sir Har. Yes, my love, it was the very day your little bitch Minxey pupt.

La. Syc. And pray what did the whole family say? my lord John, and my lord Thomas, and my lady Duchess in particular? Cousin, says her Grace to me—— for she always called me cousin——

Theo. Well, but madam, to cut this matter short at once, my father has a great regard for Mr. Mervin, and would consent to our union with all his heart.

La. Syc. Do you say so, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Who I, love!

La. Syc. Then all my care and prudence are come to nothing.

Sir Har. Well, but stay, my lady—Dossy, you are always making mischief.

Theo. Ah! my dear sweet——

La. Syc. Do, Miss, that's right, coax——

Theo. No, madam, I am not capable of any such meanness.

La. Syc. 'Tis very civil of you to contradict me, however.

Sir Har. Eh! what's that—hands off, Dossy—don't come near me.

A I R.

Why how now, Miss pert,
Do you think to divert
My anger by fawning and stroking?
Would you make me a fool,
Your play-thing, your tool,
Was ever young minx so provoking?
Get out of my sight,
'T would be serving you right,
To lay a sound dose of the lash on.
Contradict your mama!
I've a mind, by the la;
But I won't put myself in a passion.

[Exit Theodosia.]

Enter Lord Aimworth and Giles.

L. Aim. Come, farmer, you may come in, there are none here but friends.—Sir Harry, your servant.

Sir Har. My lord, I kiss your lordship's hands—I hope he did not overhear us squabbling.

L. Aim. Well now, master Giles, what is it you have got to say to me? If I can do you any service, this company will give you leave to speak.

Giles. I thank your lordship, I has not got a great deal to say; I do come to your lordship about a little business if you'll please to give me the hearing.

L. Aim. Certainly, only let me know what it is.

Giles. Why an please you my lord, being left alone, as I may say, seyther dead, and all the business upon my own hands, I do think of settling and taking a wife, and am come to ax your honour's consent.

L. Aim. My consent, farmer! if that be necessary, you have it with all my heart—I hope you have taken care to make a prudent choice.

Giles. Why I do hope so, my lord.

L. Aim. Well, and who is the happy fair one? Does she live in my house?

Giles. No, my lord, she does not live in your house, but she's a parson of your acquaintance.

L. Aim. Of my acquaintance!

Giles. No offence, I hope, your honour.

L. Aim. None in the least; but how is she an acquaintance of mine?

Giles. Your lordship do know miller Fairfield?

L. Aim.

L. Aim. Well—

Giles. And Patty Fairfield, his daughter, my lord?

L. Aim. Ay; is it her you think of marrying?

Giles. Why if so be as your lordship has no objection; to be sure we will do nothing without your consent and approbation.

L. Aim. Upon my word, farmer, you have made an excellent choice.—It is a god-daughter of my mother's, who was bred up under her care, and I protest I do not know a more amiable young woman.—But are you sure, farmer, that Patty herself is inclinable to this match?

Giles. O yes, my lord, I am fertain of that.

L. Aim. Perhaps then she desired you to come and ask my consent?

Giles. Why as far as this here, my lord; to be sure, the miller did not care to publish the banns, without making your lordship acquainted—But I hope your honour's not angry with I.

L. Aim. Angry, farmer! why should you think so?—what interest have I in it to be angry?

Sir Har. And so, honest farmer, you are going to be married to little Patty Fairfield? She's an old acquaintance of mine; how long have you and she been sweet-hearts?

Giles. Not a long while, an please your worship.

Sir Har. Well, her father's a good warm fellow; I suppose you take care that she brings something to make the pot boil?

L. Syc. What does that concern you, Sir Harry? how often must I tell you of meddling in other people's affairs?

Sir Har. My lord, a penny for your thoughts.

L. Aim. I beg your pardon, Sir Harry; upon my word, I did not think where I was.

Giles. Well then, your honour, I'll make bold to be taking my leave; I may say you gave consent for Miss Patty and I to go on.

L. Aim. Undoubtedly, farmer, if she approves of it; but are you not afraid that her education has rendered her a little unsuitable for a wife for you?

La. Syc. Oh my lord, if the girl's handy—

Sir Har. Oh, ay—when a girl's handy—

Giles. Handy! Why, saving respect, there's nothing comes amiss to her; she's cute at every varsal kind of thing.

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A I R.

Ode's my life, search England over,
 An you match her in her station,
 I'll be bound to fly the nation :
 And be sure as well I love her.
 Do but feel my heart a beating,
 Still her pretty name repeating.
 Here's the work 'tis always at,
 Pitty, patty, pat, pit, pat.

When she makes the music tinkle,
 What on yearth can sweeter be ?
 Then her little eyes so twinkle,
 'Tis a feast to hear and see.

[Exit.

Sir Har. By dad this is a good merry fellow, is not he in love, with his pitty patty ?—And so, my lord, you have given your consent that he shall marry your mother's old housekeeper. Ah, well I can see ———

L. Aim. Nobody doubts, Sir Harry, that you are very clear-sighted.

Sir Har. Yes, yes, let me alone, I know what's what ! I was a young fellow once myself ; and I should have been glad of a tenant, to take a pretty girl off my hands now and then, as well as another.

L. Aim. I protest, my dear friend, I don't understand you.

La. Syc. Nor nobody else—Sir Harry you are going at some beastliness now.

Sir Har. Who I, my lady ? not I, as I hope to live and breathe ; 'tis nothing to us, you know, what my lord does before he's married ; when I was a batchelor, I was a devil among the wenches myself ; and yet I vow to George, my lord, since I knew my lady Sycamore, and we shall be man and wife eighteen years, if we live till next Candlemas day, I never had to do——

La. Syc. Sir Harry, come out of the room, I desire.

Sir Har. Why, what's the matter, my lady, I did not say any harm ?

La. Syc. I see what you are driving at, you want to make me faint.

Sir Har. I want to make you faint, my lady !

La. Syc. Yes you do——and if you don't come out this instant I shall fall down in the chamber.—I beg, my lord, you won't speak to him.—Will you come out Sir Harry ?

Sir Har. Nay, but my lady !

La.

La. Syc. No, I will have you out.

[*Exeunt Sir Harry and Lady Sycamore.*]

L. Aim. This worthy baronet, and his lady, are certainly a very whimsical couple; however, their daughter is perfectly amiable in every respect: and yet I am sorry I have brought her down here; for can I in honour marry her, while my affections are engaged to another? To what does the pride of condition and the censure of the world force me? Must I then renounce the only person that can make me happy; because, because what? because she's a miller's daughter? Vain pride, and unjust censure! has she not all the graces that education can give her sex; improved by a genius seldom found among the highest? Has she not modesty, sweetness of temper, and beauty of person, capable of adorning a rank the most exalted? But it is too late to think of these things now; my hand is promised, my honour engaged: and if it was not so, she has engaged herself; the farmer is a person to her mind, and I have authorized their union by my approbation.

A I R.

The madman thus, at times, we see
With seeming reason blest;
His looks, his words, his thoughts are free,
And speak a mind at rest.

But short the calms of ease and sense,
And ah! uncertain too;

While that idea lives from whence
At first his frenzy grew.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E, *a prospect of the Mill.*

Enter Ralph, with Mervin, in a riding dress, followed by Fanny.

Fanny. Ah, pray your honour, try if you have not something to spare for poor Fanny the gypsy.

Ralph. I tell you, Fan, the gentleman has no change about him; why the plague will you be so troublesome?

Fanny. Lord what is it to you, if his honour has a mind to give me a trifle? Do pray, gentleman, put your hand in your pocket.

Mer. I am almost distracted! Ungrateful Theodosia, to change so suddenly, and write me such a letter! However, I am resolved to have my dismissal face to face; this letter may be forced from her by her mother, who I know

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I know was never cordially my friend : I could not get a sight of her in London, but here they will be less on their guard ; and see her I will, by one means or other.

Fanny. Then your honour will not extend your charity ?

A I R.

I am young, and I am friendless,
And poor, alas ! withal ;
Sure my sorrows will be endless ;
In vain for help I call.
Have some pity in your nature,
To relieve a wretched creature,
Though the gift be ne'er so small.
May you, possessing every blessing,
Still inherit Sir, all you merit, Sir,
And never know what it is to want ;
Sweet Heaven your worship all happiness grant.

[*Exit.*]

Ralph. Now I'll go and take that money from her, and I have a good mind to lick her, so I have.

Mer. Pho, pr'ythee stay where you are.

Ralph. Nay, but I hate to see a toad so devilish greedy.

Mer. Well, come, she has not got a great deal, and I have thought how she may do me a favour in her turn.

Ralph. Ay, but you may put that out of your head, for I can tell you she won't.

Mer. How so ?

Ralph. How so ! why she's as cunning as the Devil.

Mer. Oh she is !—I fancy I understand you Well, in that case, friend Ralph—Your name's Ralph, I think.

Ralph. Yes, sir, at your service, for want of a better.

Mer. I say then, friend Ralph, in that case, we will remit the favour you think of, till the lady is in a more complying humour, and try if she cannot serve me at present in some other capacity.—There are a good many gypsies hereabout, are there not ?

Ralph. Softly—I have a whole gang of them here in our barn ; I have kept them about the place these three months, and all on account of she.

Mer. Really !

C

Ralph.

Ralph. Yes—but for your life don't say a word of it to any Christian—I am in love with her.

Mer. Indeed!

Ralph. Feyther is as mad with me about it as Old Scratch; and I gets the plague and all of anger; but I don't mind that.

Mer. Well, friend Ralph, if you are in love, no doubt you have some influence over your mistress; don't you think you could prevail upon her, and her companions, to supply me with one of her habits, and let me go up with them to-day to my lord Aimworth's?

Ralph. Why, do you want to go a mumming? We never do that here but in the Christmas holidays.

Mer. No matter: manage this for me, and manage it with secrecy; and I promise you shall not go unrewarded.

Ralph. Oh! as for that, sir, I don't look for any thing, I can easily get you a bundle of their rags; but I don't know whether you'll prevail on them to go up to my lord's, because they're afraid of a big dog that's in the yard: but I'll tell you what I can do—I can go up before you, and have the dog fastened, for I know his kennel.

Mer. That will do very well—By means of this disguise I shall probably get a sight of her; and I leave the rest to love and fortune.

A I R.

Why quits the merchant, blest with ease,
The pleasures of his native seat,
To tempt the dangers of the seas,
And climes more perilous than these,
Midst freezing cold, or scorching heat?
He knows the hardship, knows the pain,
The length of way, but thinks it small;
The sweets of what he hopes to gain,
Undaunted, make him combat all.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Patty, Ralph, Giles, Fanny.

Giles. So, his lordship was as willing as the flowers in May—and as I was coming along, who should I meet but your father—and he bid me run in all haste and tell you—for we were sure you would be deadly glad.

Patty. I know not what business you had to go to my lord's at all, farmer.

Giles. Nay, I only did as I was desired—Master Fairfield

THE MILL.

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field bid me tell you moreover, as how he wou'd have you go up to my lord out of hand, and thank him.

Ralph. So she ought; and take off those cloaths, and put on what's more becoming her station; you know my father spoke to you of that this morning too.

Patty. Brother, I shall obey my father.

Lie still my heart!—oh! fatal stroke,
That kills at once my hopes and me.

Giles. Miss Pat!

Patty. ———— what?

Giles. ———— Nay, I only spoke.

Ralph. Take courage, mon, she does but joke.

Come, sister, somewhat kinder be.

Fanny. This is a thing the most oddest,
Some folks are so plaguily modest;

Ral. Fan. { Were we in the case,
To be in their place,
We'd carry it off with a different face.

Giles. Thus I take her by the hily hand,
So soft and white.

Ralph. ———— Why now that's right:
And kiss her too, mon, never stand.

Pat. Giles. { What words can explain
My pleasure—my pain?
It presses, it rises,
My heart it surprises,
I can't keep it down, tho' I'd never so fain.

Fanny. So here the play ends,
The lovers are friends;

Ralph. Hush;

Fanny. ———— Tush!

Giles. ———— Nahr!

Patty. ———— Psha!

All. What torment's exceeding, what joys are above:
The pains and the pleasures that wait upon love.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE, *a marble portico, ornamented with statues, which opens from Lord Aimworth's house; two chairs near the front.*

Enter Lord Aimworth reading.

IN how contemptible a light would the situation I am now in shew me to most of the fine men of the present

THE MAID OF

sent age! In love with a country girl; rivalled by a poor fellow, one of my meanest tenants, and uneasy at it! If I had a mind to her, I know they would tell me, I ought to have taken care to make myself easy long ago, when I had her in my power. But I have the testimony of my own heart in my favour; and I think, was it to do again, I should act as I have done. Let's see, what have we here? perhaps a book may compose my thoughts; [*reads and throws the book away*] it's to no purpose, I can't read, I can't think, I can't do anything.

A I R.

Ah! how vainly mortals treasure
 Hopes of happiness and pleasure,
 Hard and doubtful to obtain;
 By what standards false we measure!
 Still pursuing
 Ways to ruin,
 Seeking bliss, and finding pain.

Enter Patty.

Patty. Now comes the trial; no, my sentence is already pronounc'd, and I will meet my fate with prudence and resolution.

L. Aim. Who's there?

Patty. My lord!

L. Aim. Patty Fairfield!

Patty. I humbly beg pardon, my lord, for pressing so abruptly into your presence; but I was told I might walk this way; and I am come by my father's commands to thank your lordship for all your favours.

L. Aim. Favours, Patty! what favours? I have done you none; but why this metamorphosis? I protest, if you had not spoke, I should not have known you; I never saw you wear such cloaths as these in my mother's life time.

Patty. No, my lord, it was her ladyship's pleasure I should wear better, and therefore I obeyed; but it is now my duty to dress in a manner more suitable to my station, and future prospects in life.

L. Aim. I am afraid, Patty, you are too humble—— come sit down——nay, I will have it so.—What is it I have been told to-day, Patty? It seems you are going to be married.

Patty. Yes, my lord.

L. Aim. Well, and don't you think you could have
 made

made a better choice than farmer Giles? I should imagine your person, your accomplishments, might have intitled you to look higher.

Patty. Your lordships is pleased to over-rate my little merit: the education I received in your family, does not intitle me to forget my origin; and the farmer is my equal.

L. Aim. In what respect? The degrees of rank and fortune, my dear Patty, are arbitrary distinctions, unworthy the regard of those who consider justly; the true standard of equality is seated in the mind: those who think nobly are noble.

Patty. The farmer, my lord, is a very honest man.

L. Aim. So he may: I don't suppose he would break into a house, or commit a robbery on the highway: what do you tell me of his honesty for?

Patty. I did not mean to offend your lordship.

L. Aim. Offend! I am not offended, Patty; not at all offended——But is there any great merit in a man's being honest?

Patty. I don't say there is, my lord.

L. Aim. The farmer is an ill-bred, illiterate booby; and what happiness can you propose to yourself in such a society?——Then, as to his person, I am sure——But perhaps, Patty, you like him; and if so, I am doing a wrong thing.

Patty. Upon my word, my lord——

L. Aim. Nay, I see you do: he has had the good fortune to please; and in that case, you are certainly in the right to follow your inclinations.—I must tell you one thing, Patty, however—I hope you won't think it unfriendly of me——But I am determined farmer Giles shall not stay a moment on my estate, after next quarter day.

Patty. I hope, my lord, he has not incurred your displeasure——

L. Aim. That's of no signification.—Could I find as many good qualities in him as you do, perhaps——But 'tis enough, he's a fellow I don't like; and as you have a regard for him, I would have you advise him to provide himself.

Patty. My lord, I am very unfortunate.

L. Aim. She loves him, 'tis plain——Come, Patty, don't cry; I would not willingly do any thing to make you uneasy.—Have you seen Miss Sycamore yet?——I suppose you know she and I are going to be married.

Patty. So I hear, my lord.——Heaven make you both happy!

L. Aim. Thank you, Patty; I hope we shall be happy.

Patty. Upon my knees, upon my knees I pray it: may every earthly bliss attend you! may your days prove an uninterrupted course of delightful tranquillity; and your mutual friendship, confidence and love, end but with your lives!

L. Aim. Rise, Patty, rise; say no more——I suppose you'll wait upon Miss Sycamore before you go away——at present I have a little business——As I said, Patty, don't afflict yourself: I have been somewhat hasty with regard to the farmer; but since I see how deeply you are interested in his affairs, I may possibly alter my designs with regard to him——You know——You know, Patty, your marriage with him is no concern of mine——I only speak——

A I R.

My passion in vain I attempt to dissemble:

Th' endeavour to hide it, but makes it appear:

Enraptur'd I gaze; when I touch her I tremble,
And speak to and hear her, with falt'ring and fear.

By how many cruel ideas tormented!

My blood's in a ferment; it freezes, it burns:

This moment I wish, what the next is repented;

While love, rage and jealousy, rack me by turns.

Enter Giles.

[Exit.

Giles. Miss Pat—Odd rabbit it, I thought his honour was here; and I wish I may die if my heart did not jump into my mouth——Come, come down in all haste, there's such rig below as you never knew in your born days.

Patty. Rig!

Giles. There's as good as forty of the tenants, men and maidens, have got upon the lawn before the castle, with pipers and garlands; just for all the world as tho' it was May-day; and the quality's looking at them out of the windows——'Tis as true as any thing; on account of my lord's coming home with his new lady——

Patty. Well, and what then?

Giles. Why I was thinking, if so be as you would come down, as we might take a dance together: little Sal, farmer Harrow's daughter, of the Green, would fain have had me for a partner; but I said as how I'd go for one I liked better, one that I'd make a partner for life.

Patty.

Patty. Did you say so?

Giles. Yes, and she was struck all of a heap——she had not a word to throw to a dog——for Sal and I kept company once for a little bit.

Patty. Farmer, I am going to say something to you, and I desire you will listen to it attentively. It seems you think of our being married together.

Giles. Think, why I think of nothing else; it's all over the place, mun, as how you are to be my spouse; and you would not believe what game folks make of me.

Patty. Shall I talk to you like a friend, farmer——You and I were never designed for one another; and I am morally certain we should not be happy.

Giles. Oh! as for that matter, I never has no words with nobody.

Patty. Shall I speak plainer to you, then——I don't like you.

Giles. No!

Patty. On the contrary, you are disagreeable to me---

Giles. Am I!

Patty. Yes, of all things: I deal with you sincerely.

Giles. Why, I thought, Miss Pat, the affair between you and I was all fix'd and settled.

Patty. Well, let this undeceive you——Be assured we shall never be man and wife. No offer shall persuade, no command force me.——You know my mind; make your advantage of it.

A I R.

Was I sure a life to lead,
Wretched as the vilest slave,
Every hardship would I brave;
Rudest toil, severest need,
Ere yield my hand so coolly,
To the man who never truly
Could my heart in keeping have.
Wealth with others success will insure you,
Where your wit and your person may please;
Take to them your love, I conjure you,
And in mercy set me at ease. *Exit.*

Giles. Here's a turn!——I don't know what to make of it: she's gone mad, that's for sartin; wit and learning have crack'd her brain——Poor soul, poor soul!——It is often the case of those who have too much of them.——Lord, Lord, how sorry I be——But hold, she says I baint to her mind——mayn't all this be the effect of modish coyness

THE MAID OF

ness, to do like the gentlewomen, because she was bred among them? And I have heard say, they will be upon their vixen tricks, till they go into the very church with a man.—I cod there's nothing more likelier; for it is the cry of one and all, that she's the moral of a lady in every thing; and our farmers daughters, for the matter of that, tho' they have nothing to boast of but a scrap of red ribbon about their hats, will have as many turnings and windings as a hare, before one can lay a fast hold of them.—There can no harm come of speaking with master Fairfield, however—Odd rabbit it, how plaguy tart she was—I am half vext myself now that I let her go off so.

A I R.

When a maid, in way of marriage,
First is courted by a man,
Let 'un do the best he can,
She's so shame-fac'd in her carriage,
'Tis with pain the suit's began.
Tho'f mayhap she likes him mainly,
Still she shams it coy and cold;
Fearing to confis it plainly,
Lest the folks should think her bold.
But the parson comes in sight,
Gives the word to bill and coo;
'Tis a different story quite,
And she quickly buckies too.

[Exit

SCENE *a view of Lord Aimworth's house, and improvements; a seat under a tree, and part of the garden wall, with a Chinese pavilion over it. Theodosia and Patty enter through a gate supposed to have a connection with the principal building.*

Theo. Well then, my dear Patty, you will run away from us: but why in such a hurry? I have a thousand things to say to you.

Patty. I shall do myself the honour to pay my duty to you some other time, madam; at present I really find myself a little indisposed.

Theo. Nay, I would by no means lay you under any restraint. But methinks the entertainment we have just been taking part of, should have put you into better spirits: I am not in an over-merry mood myself, yet. I swear, I could not look on the diversion of those honest folks, without feeling a certain *gaieté de cœur*.

Patty.

Patty. Why, indeed, madam, it had one circumstance attending it, which is often wanting to more polite amusements; that of seeming to give undissembled satisfaction to those who were engaged in it.

Theo. Oh, infinite, infinite! to see the chearful, healthy-looking creatures, toil with such a good-will! To me there were more genuine charms in their awkward stumping and jumping about, their rude measures, and homespun finery, than in all the dress, splendor, and studied graces, of a birth-night ball-room.

Patty. 'Tis a very uncommon declaration to be made by a fine lady, madam: but certainly, however the artful delicacies of high life may dazzle and surprize, nature has particular attractions, even in a cottage, her most undarned state, which seldom fails to affect us, tho' we can scarce give a reason for it.

Theo. But you know, *Patty*, I was always a distracted admirer of the country; no damsel in romance was ever fonder of groves and purling streams: had I been born in the days of Arcadia, with my present propensity, instead of being a fine lady, as you call me, I should certainly have kept a flock of sheep.

Patty. Well, madam, you have the sages, poets, and philosophers of all ages, to countenance your way of thinking.

Theo. And you, my little philosophical friend, don't you think me in the right too?

Patty. Yes indeed, madam, perfectly.

A I R.

Trust me, would you taste true pleasure,
Without mixture, without measure,
Nowhere shall you find the treasure
Sure as in the sylvan scene:

Blest, who, no false glare requiring,
Nature's rural sweets admiring,
Can, from crosser joys retiring,
Seek the simple and serene.

[Exit.

Enter MERVIN and FANNY.

Mer. Yonder she is seated; and, to my wish, most fortunately alone. Accost her as I desired.

Theo. Heigh!

Fanny. Heaven bless you, my sweet lady——bless your honour's beautiful visage, and send you a good husband, and a great many of them.

Theo.

Theo. A very comfortable with, upon my word: who are you, child?

Fanny. A poor gypsey, an' please you, that goes about begging from charitable gentlemen and ladies——If you have e'er a coal or bit of writing in your pocket, I'll write you the first letter of your sweetheart's name how many husbands you will have; and how many children, my lady: or, if you'll let me look at your line of life, I'll tell you whether it will be long or short, happy or miserable.

Theo. Oh! as for that, I know it already—you cannot tell me any good fortune, and therefore I'll hear none. Go about your business.

Mer. Stay, madam, stay, [*Pretending to lift a paper from the ground*] you have dropt something——Fan, call the young gentlewoman back.

Fanny. Lady, you have lost——

Theo. Pho, pho, I have lost nothing.

Mer. Yes, that paper, lady; you dropt it as you got up from the chair.——Fan, give it to her honour.

Theo. A letter with my address!—[*Takes the paper and reads*]—Come hither, child: do you know any thing of the gentleman that wrote this?

Fanny. My lady——

Theo. Make haste, run this moment, bring me to him, bring him to me, say I wait with impatience; tell him I will go, fly any where——

Mer. My life, my charmer!

Theo. Oh, Heavens!——Mr. Mervin!

Enter Sir Harry, Lady Sycamore, and Gypies.

La. Syc. Sir Harry, don't walk so fast, we are not running for a wager.

Sir Har. Hough, hough, hough.

La. Syc. Hey-day! you have got a cough; I shall have you laid up upon my hands presently.

Sir Har. No no, my lady, it's only the old affair.

La. Syc. Come here, and let me tie this handkerchief about your neck; you have put yourself into a muck-sweat already. [*Ties a handkerchief about his neck*] Have you taken your Bardana this morning? I warrant you so now, though you have been complaining of twitches two or three times; and you know the gouty season is coming on. Why will you be so neglectful of your health, Sir Harry? I protest I am forced to watch you like an infant.

S.H. My lovey takes care of me, and I am obliged to her.

La. Syc. Well, but you ought to mind me then, since you are satisfied I never speak but for your good.—I thought Miss Sycamore, you were to have followed your papa and me into the garden—How far did you go with that wench?

Tbeo. They are gypsies, madam, they say. Indeed I don't know what they are.

La. Syc. I wish, Miss, you would learn to give a rational answer.—

Sir Har. Eh! what's that? gypsies! Have we gypsies here! Vagrants, they pretend to a knowledge of future events: diviners, fortune-tellers!

Fanny. Yes, your worship, we'll tell your fortune, or her ladyship's for a crumb of bread, or a little broken victuals: what you throw to your dogs, an' please you.

Sir Har. Broken victuals, hussy! How do you think we should have broken victuals? — If we were at home, indeed, perhaps you might get some such thing from the cook: but here we are only on a visit to a friend's house, and have nothing to do with the kitchen at all.

La. Syc. And do you think, Sir Harry, it is necessary to give the creature an account?

Sir Har. No love, no; but what can you say to obstinate people?—G t you gone, bold face—I once knew a merchant's wife in the city, my lady, who had her fortune told by some of those gypsies. They said she should die at such a time; and I warrant, as sure as the day came, the poor getlewoman actually died with the conceit. — Come, Dossy, your mama and I are going to take a walk—My lady, will you have hold of my arm?

La. Syc. No, Sir Harry, I choose to go by myself.

Mer. Now, love assist me.—[Turning to the gypsies.] Follow, and take all your cures from me—Nay, but good lady and gentleman, you won't go without remembering the poor gypsies.

Sir Har. Hey! here is all the gang after us.

Gyp. Pray, your noble honour.

La. Syc. Come back into the garden; we shall be covered with vermin

Gyp. Out of the bowels of your commiseration.

La. Syc. They press upon us more and more; yet that girl has no mind to leave them: I shall swoon away.

Sir Har. Don't be frighten'd, my lady; let me advance.

A I R.

THE MAID OF

A I R.

You vile pack of vagabonds, what do you mean ?

I'll maul you, rascallious,

Ye tatter-demallions—

If one of them comes within reach of my cane.

Such cursed assurance,

'Tis past all endurance.

Nay, nay, pray come away.

They're lyars and thieves,

And he that believes

Their foolish predictions,

Will find them but fictions,

A bubble that always deceives.

[*Exit Sir Harry, Lady Sycamore, and Theodofia, followed by Mervin and a Gypsy.*]

Fanny. Oh! mercy, dear—The gentleman is so bold, 'tis well if he does not bring us into trouble. Who knows but this may be a justice of peace! and see, he's following them into the garden!

1st Gyp. Well, 'tis all your seeking, Fan.

Fanny. We shall have warrants to take us up, I'll be hang'd else. We had better run away, the servants will come out with sticks to lick us.

Mer. Cursed ill fortune—[*Here Mervin returns with the gipsy*]—She's gone, and, perhaps, I shall not have another opportunity—And you, ye blundering block-head, I won't give you a halfpenny——Why did you not clap to the garden door, when I called to you, before the young lady got in? The key was on the outside, which would have given me some time for an explanation.

2d Gyp. An please your honour I was dubus.

Mer. Dubus! plague chout ye——However, it is some satisfaction that I have been able to let her see me and know where I am [Turning to the gypsies, who go off]——Go, get you gone, all of you, about your business.

Theo. D'sappeared! fled! [Theodofia appears in the pavilion]—Oh, how unlucky this is!—Could he not have patience to wait a moment?

Mer. I know not what to resolve on.

Theo. Hem!

Mer. I'll go back to the garden-door.

Theo. Mr. Mervin!

Mer.

THE MILL.

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Mer. What do I see!—'tis she, 'tis she herself!—
Oh Theodosia!—Shall I climb up the wall and come up
to you?

Theo. No; speak softly:—Sir Harry and my Lady sit
below at the end of the walk.—How much am I obliged
to you for taking this trouble!

Mer. When their happiness is at stake, what is it men
will not attempt?—Say but you love me—

Theo. What proof would you have me give you?— I
know but of one; if you please I am willing to go off with
you.

Mer. Are you!—Would to Heaven I had brought a
carriage!

Theo. How did you come?—Have you not horses?

Mer. No; there's another misfortune.—To avoid
suspicion, there being but one little public-house in the
village, I dispatched my servant with them, about an hour
ago, to wait for me at a town twelve miles distant, whither
I pretended to go; but alighting a mile off, I equipt my-
self, and came back as you see: neither can we, nearer
than this town, get a post-chaise.

Theo. You say you have made a confidant of the mil-
ler's son:—return to your place of rendezvous:—
my father has been asked this moment, by Lord Aim-
worth, who is in the garden, to take a walk with him
down to the mill:—they will go before dinner;—and
it shall be hard if I cannot contrive to be one of the
company.

Mer. And what then?—

Theo. Why, in the mean time, you may devise some
method to carry me from hence: and I'll take care you
shall have an opportunity of communicating it to me.

Mer. Well, but dear Theodosia—

A I R.

Theo. Hift, hift! I hear my mother call—

Pr'ythee be gone;

We'll meet anon:

Catch this, and this—

Blow me a kiss,

In pledge of promis'd truth, that's all.

Farewell!—and yet a moment stay;

Something beside I had to say:

Well, 'tis forgot;

No matter what—

D

Love

THE MAID OF

Love grant us grace;
The mill's the place:
She calls again, I must away.

[Exit.

Enter Fanny.

Fan. Please your honour, you were so kind as to say you would remember my fellow-travellers for their trouble: and they think I have gotten the money.

Mer. Oh, here; give them this—— [*Gives her money.*
And for you, my dear little pilot, you have brought me so cleverly through my business, that I must——

Fan. Oh, Lord!—your honour—— [*Mervin kisses her.*
Pray don't——kiss me again.

Mer. Again, and again.——There's a thought come into my head.——Theodosia will certainly have no objection to putting on the dress of a sister of mine.——So, and so only, we may escape to-night.——This girl, for a little money, will provide us with necessaries.——

Fan. Dear gracious! I warrant you, now, I am as red as my petticoat: why would you royster and touzle one so?——If Ralph was to see you, he'd be as jealous as the vengeance.

Mer. Hang Ralph! Never mind him.——There's a guinea for thee.

Fan. What, a golden guinea?——

Mer. Yes; and if thou art a good girl, and do as I desire thee, thou shalt have twenty.

Fan. Ay, but not all gold?

Mer. As good as that is.

Fan. Shall I though, if I does as you bids me?

Mer. You shall.

Fan. Precious heart! He's a sweet gentleman!—Icod I have a great mind——

Mer. What art thou thinking about?

Fan. Thinking, your honour?——Ha, ha, ha!

Mer. Indeed, so merry.

Fan. I don't know what I am thinking about, not I—Ha, ha, ha!——Twenty guineas!

Mer. I tell thee thou shalt have them.

Fan. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mer. By Heaven I am serious.

Fan. Ha, ha, ha!——Why then I'll do whatever your honour pleases.

Mer. Stay here a little, to see that all keeps quiet: you'll find me present'y at the mill; where we'll talk further

A I R.

Yes, 'tis decreed, thou maid divine !

I must, I will possess thee :

Oh, what delight within my arms to press thee !

To kiss and call thee mine !

Let me this only bliss enjoy,

That ne'er can waste, that ne'er can cloy,

All other pleasures I resign.

Why should we dally,

Stand still; shall I ?

Let fortune smile or frown,

Love will attend us ;

Love will befriend us ;

And all our wishes crown.

[Exit.]

Enter Ralph.

Fan. What a dear kind of soul he is! — Here comes Ralph — I can tell him, unless he makes me his lawful wife, as he has often said he would, the devil a word more shall he speak to me.

Ralph. So, Fan, where's the gentleman?

Fan. How should I know where he is; what do you ask me for?

Ralph. There's no harm in putting a civil question, be there? Why you look as cross and ill-natured——

Fan. Well, mayhap I do—and mayhap I have where-withal for it.

Ralph. Why, has the gentleman offered any thing uncivil? Ecod, I'd try a bout as soon as look at him.

Fan. He offer—no!——he's a gentleman every inch of him. But you are sensible, Ralph, you have been promising me, a great while, this, and that, and t'other; and, when all comes to all, I don't see but you are like the rest of them.

Ralph. Why, what is it I have promised?

Fan. To marry me in the church, you have a hundred times.

Ralph. Well, and mayhap I will—— if you'll have patience.

Fan. Patience me no patience; you may do it now if you please.

Ralph. Well, but suppose I don't please? I tell you, Fan, you're a fool, and want to quarrel with your bread and butter; I have had anger enow from seyther already

THE MAID OF

upon your account, and you want me to come by more—
As I said, if you have patience, mayhap things may fall
out, and mayhap not.

Fan. With all my heart, then; and now I know your
mind, you may go hang yourself.

Ralph. Ay, ay!

Fan. Yes, you may—who cares for you?

Ralph. Well—and who cares for you, an you go to
that?

Fan. A menial feller—Go mind your mill and your
drudgery; I don't think you worthy to wipe my shoes—
feller.

Ralph. Nay, but Fan, keep a civil tongue in your
head: odds flesh! I would fain know what fly bites all
on a sudden now?

Fan. Marry come up, the best gentlemen's sons in the
country have made me proffers; and if one is a miss,
be a miss to a gentleman I say, that will give one fine
cloaths, and take one to see the show, and put money in
one's pocket.

Ralph. Whu—whu—*[She hits him a slap.]*—What's
that for?

Fan. What do you whistle for then? Do you think I
am a dog?

Ralph. Never from me, Fan, if I have not a mind to
give you, with this switch here in my hand, as good a
lacing——

Fan. Touch me, if you dare: touch me, and I'll swear
my life against you.

Ralph. A murrain! with her damn'd little fist, as hard
as she could draw.

Fan. Well, it's good enough for you;—I am not ne-
cessitated to take up with the impudence of such a low-
lived monkey as you are. — A gentleman's my friend,
and I can have twenty guineas in my hand, all as good as
this is.

Ralph. Belike from this Londoner, eh?

Fan. Yes, from him—so you may take your promise
of marriage; I don't value it that—*[spits]*——and if you
speak to me, I'll slap your chops again.

A I R.

Lord, sir, you seem mighty uneasy;

But I the refusal can bear:

I warrant I shall not run crazy,

Nor die in a fit of despair.

THE MILL.

33

If so you suppose, you're mistaken;

For, sir, for to let you to know,

I'm not such a maiden forsaken,

But I have two strings to my bow. [Exit.

Ralph. Indeed! Now I'll be judged by any soul living in the world, if ever there was a viler piece of treachery than this here; there is no such a thing as a true friend upon the face of the globe, and so I have said an hundred times! A couple of base, deceitful——after all my love and kindness shewn. Well, I'll be revenged; see an I ben't——Master Marvint, that's his name, an he do not sham it: he has come here and disguised unself; whereof 'tis contrary to law so to do: besides I do partly know why he did it; and I'll fish out the whole conjuration, and go up to the castle and tell every syllable; a shan't carry a wench from me, were he twenty times the mon he is, and twenty times to that again; and moreover than so, the first time I meet un, I'll knock un down, tho'f 'twas before my lord himself: and he may capias me for it afterwards an he wull.

A I R.

As they count me such a ninny

So let them rule the roast;

I'll bet any one a guinea

They have scor'd without their host.

But if I don't shew them in lieu of it,

A trick that's fairly worth two of it,

Then let me pass for a fool and an ass.

To be sure, yon sly cajoler,

Thought the work as good as done,

When he found the little stroller

Was so easy to be won.

But if I don't shew him in lieu of it,

A trick that's fairly worth two of it,

Then let me pass for a fool and an ass. [Exit.

SCENE, a room in the mill, two chairs, with a table and a tankard of beer.

Enter Fairfield and Giles.

Fairf. In short, farmer, I don't know what to say to thee. I have spoken to her all I can; but I think children were born to pull the grey hairs of their parents to the grave with sorrow.

Giles. Nay, Master Fairfield, don't take on about it: belike Miss Pat has another love: and if so, in Heaven's

name be't: what's one man's meat, as the saying is, is another man's poison; and, tho' some might find me well enough to their fancy, yet in case I don't suit her's, why there's no harm done.

Fairf. Well but, neighbour, I have put that to her; and the story is, she has no inclination to marry any one; all she desires, is to stay at home and take care of me.

Giles. Master Fairfield——here's towards your good health.

Fairf. Thank thee, friend Giles—and here's towards thine.——I promise thee, had things gone as we proposed, thou should'st have had one half of what I was worth, to the uttermost farthing.

Giles. Why to be sure, Master Fairfield, I am not the less obligated to your good will; but as to that matter, had I married, it should not have been for the lucre of gain; but if I do like a girl, do you see, I do like her; ay, and I'll take her, saving respect, if she had not a second petticoat.

Fairf. Well said——where love is, with a little industry, what have a young couple to be afraid of? And, by the Lord Harry, for all that's past, I cannot help thinking we shall bring our matters to bear yet——Young women, you know, friend Giles——

Giles. Why, that's what I have been thinking with myself, master Fairfield.

Fairf. Come, then, mend thy draught.—Duce take me if I let it drop so——But, in any case, don't you go to make yourself uneasy.

Giles. Uneasy! master Fairfield!; what good would that do?——For farten, seeing how things were, I should have been very glad they had gone accordingly: but if they change, 'tis no fault of mine, you know.

A I R.

Zooks! why should I sit down and grieve?

No case so hard there mayn't be had

Some med'cine to relieve.

Here's what masters all disasters;

With a cup of nut-brown beer,

Thus my drooping thoughts I cheer:

If one pretty damsel fail me,

From another I may find

Return more kind;

What a murrain then should ail me!

All girls are not of a mind.

He's

He's a child that whimpers for a toy ;
So here's to thee, honest boy.

[Exit.

Enter Lord Aimworth.

Fairf. O the goodness, his lordship's honour!—you are come into a litter'd place, my noble sir—the arm chair——will it please your honour to repose you on this, till a better——

L. Aim. Thank you, miller,—there's no occasion for either.—I only want to speak a few words to you, and have company waiting for me without.

Fairf. Without——won't their honours favour my poor hovel so far——

L. Aim. No, miller, let them stay where they are.—I find you are about marrying your daughter—I know the great regard my mother had for her; and am satisfied, that nothing but her sudden death could have prevented her leaving her a handsome provision.

Fairf. Dear my lord, your noble mother, you, and all your family, have heaped favours on favours on my poor child.

L. Aim. Whatever has been done for her she has fully merited.

Fairf. Why, to be sure, my lord, she is a very good girl.

L. Aim. Poor old man——but those are tears of satisfaction——Here, master Fairfield, to bring matters to a short conclusion, here is a bill of a thousand pounds——Portion your daughter with what you think convenient of it.

Fairf. A thousand pounds, my lord! Pray excuse me; excuse me, worthy sir; too much has been done already, and we have no pretensions——

L. Aim. I insist upon your taking it——Put it up, and say no more.

Fairf. Well, my lord, if it must be so:—but indeed, indeed——

L. Aim. In this I only fulfil what I am satisfied would please my mother. As to myself, I shall take upon me all the expences of Patty's wedding, and have already given orders about it.

Fairf. Alas, sir, you are too good, too generous: but I fear we shall not be able to profit of your kind intentions, unless you will condescend to speak a little to Patty.

L. Aim. How speak?

Fairf.

Fairf. Why, my lord, I thought we had pretty well ordered all things concerning this marriage ; but all on a sudden the girl has taken it into her head not to have the farmer, and declares she will never marry at all.—But I know, my lord, she'll pay great respect to any thing you say ; and if you'll but lay your commands on her to marry him, I'm sure she'll do it.

L. Aim. Who, I lay my commands on her ?

Fairf. Yes, pray my lord, do ; I'll send her in to you, and I humbly beg you will tell her, you insist upon the match going forward ; tell her, you insist upon it, my lord, and speak a little angrily to her. [Exit.

Enter Patty.

L. Aim. I came hither, Patty, in consequence of our conversation this morning, to render your change of state as agreeable and happy as I could :—but your father tells me, you have fallen out with the farmer ; has any thing happened, since I saw you last, to alter your good opinion of him.

Patty. No, my lord : I am of the same opinion with regard to the farmer now as I always was.

L. Aim. I thought, Patty, you loved him, you told me——

Patty. My lord !

L. Aim. Well, no matter—it seems I have been mistaken in that particular——Possibly your affections are engaged elsewhere : let me but know the man that can make you happy, and I swear——

Patty. Indeed, my lord, you take too much trouble upon my account.

L. Aim. Perhaps, Patty, you love somebody so much beneath you, you are ashamed to own it ; but your esteem confers a value wheresoever it is placed. I was too harsh with you this morning : our inclinations are not in our own power : they master the wisest of us.

Patty. Pray, pray, my lord, talk not to me in this stile : consider me as one destined by birth and fortune to the meanest condition and offices ; who has unhappily been apt to imbibe sentiments contrary to them ! Let me conquer a heart where pride and vanity have usurped an improper rule ; and learn to know myself, of whom I have been too long ignorant.

L. Aim. Perhaps, Patty, you love some one so much above you, you are afraid to own it——If so, be his rank what it will, he is to be envied : for the love of a woman

woman of virtue, beauty, and sentiment, does honour to a monarch.——What means that downcast look, those tears, those blushes? Dare you not confide in me?—Do you think, Patty, you have a friend in the world would sympathize with you more sincerely than I?

Patty. What shall I answer!—No, my lord, you have ever treated me with a kindness, a generosity of which none but minds like yours are capable: you have been my instructor, my adviser, my protector: but, my lord, you have been too good: when our superiors forget the distance between us, we are sometimes led to forget it too: had you been less condescending, perhaps I had been happier.

L. Aim. And have I, Patty, have I made you unhappy: I, who would sacrifice my own felicity, to cure your's?

Patty. I beg, my lord, you will suffer me to be gone: only believe me sensible of your favours, though unworthy of the smallest.

L. Aim. How unworthy!—you merit every thing; my respect, my esteem, my friendship, and my love!——Yes, I repeat, I vow it: your beauty, your modesty, your understanding, has made a conquest of my heart.—But what a world do we live in! that, while I own this; while I own a passion for you, founded on the justest, the noblest basis, I must at the same time confess the fear of that world, its taunts, its reproaches—

Patty. Ah, sir, think better of the creature you have raised, than to suppose I ever entertained a hope tending to your dishonour: would that be a return for the favours I have received? Would that be a grateful reverence for the memory of her——Pity and pardon the disturbance of a mind that fears to enquire too minutely into its own sensations.——I am unfortunate, my lord, but not criminal.

L. Aim. Patty, we are both unfortunate: for my own part, I know not what to say to you, or what to propose to myself.

Patty. Then, my lord, 'tis mine to act as I ought; yet, while I am honoured with a place in your esteem, imagine me not insensible of so high a distinction; or capable of lightly turning my thought towards another.

L. Aim. How cruel is my situation!—I am here, Patty, to command you to marry the man who has given you so much uneasiness.

Patty.

Patty. My lord, I am convinced it is for your credit and my safety, it should be so: I hope I have not so ill profited by the lessons of your noble mother, but I shall be able to do my duty, wherever I am called to it: this will be my first support, time and reflection will complete the work.

A I R.

Cease, oh cease, to overwhelm me
With excess of bounty rare
What am I? What have I? tell me,
To deserve your meanest care?
'Gainst our fate in vain's resistance,
Let me then no grief disclose;
But resign'd at humble distance,
Offer vows for your repose.

[Exit]

Enter Sir Harry Sycamore, Theodosia, and Giles.

Sir Har. No justice of peace, no bailiffs, no head-borough!

L. Aim. What's the matter, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. The matter, my lord!—While I was examining the construction of the mill without, for I have some small notion of mechanics, Miss Sycamore had like to have been run away with by a gypsey man.

Theo. Dear papa, how can you talk so? Did not I tell you it was at my own desire the poor fellow went to shew me the canal.

Sir Har. Hold your tongue, Miss. I don't know any business you had to let him come near you at all; we have stayed so long too; your mama gave us but half an hour, and she'll be frightened out of her wits——she'll think some accident has happened to me.

L. Aim. I'll wait upon you when you please.

Sir Har. O! but my lord, here's a poor fellow; it seems his mistress has conceived some disgust against him: pray has her father spake to you to interpose your authority in his behalf!

Giles. If his lordship's honour would be so kind, I would acknowledge the favour as far as in me lay.

Sir Har. Let me speak—[takes Lord Aimworth aside.] a word or two in your lordship's ear.

Theo. Well, I do like this gypsey scheme prodigiously, if we can but put it into execution as happily as we have contrived it—[Enter Patty] So, my dear Patty, you see I am come to return your visit very soon; but this is only a call *en passant*——will you be at home after dinner?

Patty.

Patty. Certainly, madam, whenever you condescend to honour me so far: but it is what I cannot expect.

Theo. O fie, why not ———

Giles. Your servant, Miss Patty.

Patty. Farmer, your servant.

Sir Har. Here, you goodman delver I have done your business; my lord has spoke, and your fortune's made: a thousand pounds at present, and better things to come; his lordship says he will be your friend.

Giles. I do hope, then, Miss Pat will make all up.

Sir Har. Miss Pat make up! stand out of the way; I'll make it up.

The quarrels of lovers, odds me! they're a jest;
Come hither, ye blockheads, come hither:
So now let us leave them together.

L. Aim. Farewell, then!

Patty. ——— For ever!

Giles. ——— I vow and protest,

'Twas kind of his honour,
To gain thus upon her;
We're so much beholden it can't be express.

Theo. I feel something here,
'Twixt hoping and fear;
Haste, haste friendly night,
To shelter our flight——

L. Aim. } A thousand distractions are rending my breast.

Patty. }
Patty. Oh mercy!

Giles. ——— Oh dear!

Sir Har. Why, Miss will you mind when you're spoke to, or not?

Must I stand in waiting,
While you're here a prating?

L. Aim. } May ev'ry felicity fall to your lot.

Theo. }

Giles. She curtsies!—Look there,
What a shape, what an air!—

All. How happy! how wretched! how tir'd am I!
Your lordship's obedient; your servant; good bye.

Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE, *the Portico to Lord Aimworth's house.*

Enter Lord Aimworth, Sir Harry, and Lady Sycamore.

La. Syc. **A** Wretch! a vile, inconsiderable wretch? coming of such a race as mine; and having an example like me before her!

L. Aim. I beg, madam, you will not disquiet yourself: you are told here, that a gentleman lately arrived from London has been about the place to-day; that he has disguised himself like a gypsy, came hither, and had some conversation with your daughter; you are even told, that there is a design formed for their going off together; but possibly there may be some mistake in all this.

Sir Har. Ay, but, my lord, the lad tells us the gentleman's name: we have seen the gypsies; and we know she has had a hankering—

La. Syc. Sir Harry, my dear, why will you put in your word, when you hear others speaking?—I protest my lord, I'm in such confusion, I know not what to say: I can hardly support myself.

L. Aim. This gentleman, it seems, is at a little inn at the bottom of the hill.

Sir Har. I wish it was possible to have a file of musqueteers, my lord; I could head them myself, being in the militia: and we would go and seize him directly.

L. Aim. Softly, my dear sir; let us proceed with a little less violence in this matter, I beseech you. We should first see the young lady—Where is Miss Sycamore, madam?

La. Syc. Really my lord, I don't know; I saw her go into the garden about a quarter of an hour ago, from our chamber window.

Sir Har. Into the garden! perhaps she has got an inkling of our being informed of this affair, and is gone to throw herself into the pond. Despair, my lord, makes girls do terrible things. 'Twas but the Wednesday before we left London, that I saw, taken out of Rosamond's pond, in Saint James's park, as likely a young woman as ever you would desire to set your eyes on, in a new callimancoe petticoat, and a pair of silver buckles in her shoes.

L. Aim. I hope there is no danger of any such fatal accident

accident happening at present ; but you will oblige me, Sir Harry ?

Sir Har. Surely, my Lord——

L. Aim. Will you commit the whole direction of this affair to my prudence ?

Sir Har. My dear, you hear what his lordship says.

La. Syc. Indeed, my lord, I am so much affam'd, I don't know what to answer ; the fault of my daughter.

L. Aim. Don't mention it, madam ; the fault has been mine, who have been innocently the occasion of a young lady's transgressing a point of duty and decorum, which, otherwise, she would never have isolated. But if you and Sir Harry will walk in and repose yourselves, I hope to settle every thing to the general satisfaction.

La. Syc. Come in, Sir Harry. [Exit.

L. Aim. I am sure, my good friend, had I known that I was doing a violence to Miss Sycamore's inclinations, in the happiness I proposed to myself——

Sir Har. My lord, 'tis all a case——My grandfather, by the mother's side, was a very sensible man—he was elected knight of the shire in five successive parliaments ; and died high sheriff of his county ; a man of fine parts, fine talents, and one of the most curiouslest dock-er of horses in all England (but that he did only now and then for his amusement)——And he used to say, my lord, that the female sex were good for nothing but to bring forth children, and breed disturbance.

L. Aim. The ladies were very little obliged to your ancestor, Sir Harry : but for my part, I have a more favourable opinion——

Sir Har. You are in the wrong, my lord : with submission, you are really in the wrong.

A I R.

To speak my mind, of woman kind,

In one word 'tis this ;

By nature they're design'd

To say and do amiss.

Be they maids, be they wives,

Al ke they plague our lives :

Wanton, headstrong, cunning, vain ;

Born to cheat, and give men pain.

Their study, day and night,

Is mischief, their delight :

E

And

THE MAID OF

And if we should prevent,
At one door their intent ;
They quickly turn about,
And find another out.

[Exit.

Enter Fairfield.

L. Aim. How now, master Fairfield, what brings you here ?

Fairf. I am come, my lord, to thank you for your bounty to me and my daughter this morning, and most humbly to intreat your lordship to receive it at our hands again.

L. Aim. Ay ; why, what's the matter ?

Fairf. I don't know, my lord ; it seems your generosity to my poor girl has been noised about the neighbourhood ; and some evil-minded people have put it into the young man's head, that was to marry her, that you would never have made her a present so much above her deserts and expectations, if it had not been upon some naughty account : now, my lord, I am a poor man, 'tis true, and a mean one ; but I and my father, and my father's father, have lived tenants upon your lordship's estate, where we have always been known for honest men ; and it shall never be said, that Fairfield, the miller, became rich in his old days by the wages of his child's shame.

L. Aim. What then, master Fairfield, do you believe—

Fairf. No, my lord, no, Heaven forbid : but when I consider the sum, it is too much for us ; it is indeed, my lord, and enough to make bad folks talk : besides, my poor girl is greatly alter'd ; she us'd to be the life of every place she came into ; but since her being at home, I have seen nothing from her but sadness and watry eyes.

L. Aim. The farmer then refuses to marry Patty, notwithstanding their late reconciliation ?

Fairf. Yes, my lord, he does indeed ; and has made a wicked noise, and used us in a very base manner : I did not think farmer Giles would have been so ready to believe such a thing of us.

L. Aim. Well, master Fairfield, I will not press on you a donation, the rejection of which does you so much credit ; you may take my word, however, that your fears upon this occasion are entirely groundless : but this is not enough ; as I have been the means of losing your daughter

daughter one husband, it is but just I should get her another; and, since the farmer is so scrupulous, there is a young man in the house here, whom I have some influence over, and I dare say he will be less squeamish.

Fairy. To be sure, my lord, you have, in all honest ways, a right to dispose of me and mine, as you think proper.

L. Aim. Go then immediately, and bring Patty hither; I shall not be easy till I have given you entire satisfaction. But, stay and take a letter, which I am stepping into my study to write: I'll order a chaise to be got ready, that you may go back and forward with greater expedition.

A I R.

Let me fly——hence, tyrant fashion,
Teach to servile minds your law;
Curb in them each gen'rous passion,
Ev'ry motion keep in awe.

Shall I, in thy trammels going,
Quit the idol of my heart;
While it beats, all fervent, glowing?
With my life I'll sooner part.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Fanny and Ralph.

Fanny. Ralph, Ralph!

Ralph. What do you want with me, eh?

Fanny. Lord, I never knowed such a man as you are, since I com'd into the world; a body can't speak to you, but you falls straitways into a passion: I followed you up from the house, only you run so, there was no such a thing as overtaking you, and I have been waiting there at the back door ever so long.

Ralph. Well, and now you may go and wait at the fore door, if you like it: but I forewarn you and your gang not to keep lurking about our mill any longer; for if you do, I'll send the constable after you, and have you every mother's skin clapt into the county gaol: you are such a pack of thieves, one can't hang so much as a rag to dry for you: it was but the other day that a couple of them came into our kitchen to beg a handful of dirty flour to make them cakes, and before the wench could turn about, they had whipped off three brass candlesticks, and a pot lid.

Fanny. Well, sure it was not I.

E 2

Ralph.

Ralph. Then you know that old rascal, that you call father, the last time I catch'd him laying snares for the hares, I told him I'd inform the game-keeper, and I'll expose all ———

Fanny. Ah, dear Ralph, don't be angry with me.

Ralph. Yes, I will be angry with you—what do you come nigh me for?—You shan't touch me—There's the skirt of my coat, and if you do but lay a finger on it, my lord's bailiff is here in the court, and I'll call him and give you to him.

Fanny. If you'll forgive me, I'll go down on my knees.

Ralph. I tell you I won't—No, no, follow your gentleman; or go live upon your old fare, crows and polecats, and sheep that die of the rot; pick the dead fowl off the dung-hills, and squench your thirst at the next ditch, 'tis the fittest liquor to wash down such dainties—skulking about from barn to barn, and lying upon wet straw, on commons, and in green lanes—go and be whipt from parish to parish, as you used to be.

Fanny. How can you talk so unkind?

Ralph. And see whether you will get what will keep you as I did, by telling of fortunes, and coming with pillows under your apron, among the young farmers wives, to make believe you are a breeding. You know I am acquainted with all your tricks—and how you turn up the whites of your eyes, pretending you were struck blind by thunder and lightning.

Fanny. Pray don't be angry, Ralph.

Ralph. Yes but I will tho'; spread your cobwebs to catch flies, I am an old wasp, and don't value them a button.

A I R.

When you meet a tender creature,
Neat in limb and fair in feature,
Full of kindness and good-nature,
Prove as kind again to she;
Happy mortal! to possess,
In your bosom, warm and press her,
Morning, noon, and night, caress her,
And be fond, as fond can be.

But

But if one you meet that's frow-ard,
 Saucy, jilting and untow-ard,
 Should you act the whining coward,
 'Tis to mend her ne'er the whit:
 Nothing's tough enough to bind her;
 Then age, when once you find her,
 Let her go, and never mind her;
 Heart alive, you're fairly quit.

[Exit.]

Fanny. I wish I had a draught of water. He has a heart as hard as any parish officer; I don't doubt now but he would stand by and see me whipt himself; and we shall all be whipt, and all through my means — The devil run away with the gentleman, and his twenty guineas too, for leading me astray: if I had known Ralph would have taken it so, I would have hanged myself before I would have said a word—but I thought he had no more gall than a pigeon.

A I R.

O! what a simpleton was I,
 To make my bed at such a rate!
 Now lay thee down, vain fool, and cry,
 Thy true love seeks another mate.

No tears, alack,
 Will call him back,
 No tender words his heart allure;
 I could bite
 My tongue, thro' spite——

Some plague bewitch'd me, that's for sure. [Ex.]

SCENE, a Room in the Miller's House.

Enter Giles, followed by Patty and Theodosia.

Giles. Why, what the plague's the matter with you? What do you scold at me for? I am sure I did not say an uncivil word, as I do know of: I'll be judged by the young lady if I did.

Patty. 'Tis very well, farmer; all I desire is, that you will leave the house: you see my father is not at home at present; when he is, if you have any thing to say, you know where to come.

Giles. Enough said; I don't want to stay in the house, not I; and I don't much care if I had never come into it.

Theo. For shame, farmer, down on your knees, and beg

beg Miss Fairfield's pardon for the outrage you have been guilty of.

Giles. Beg pardon, Miss! for what?—Icod that's well enough; why I am my own master, ben't I?—If I have no mind to marry, there's no harm in that, I hope; 'tis only changing hands.—This morning she would not have me; and now I won't have she.

Patty. Have you!—Heav'ns and earth! do you think then 'tis the missing of you that gives me concern?—No: I would prefer a state of beggary a thousand times beyond any thing I could enjoy with you: and be assured, if ever I was seemingly consenting to such a sacrifice, nothing should have compelled me to it, but the cruelty of my situation.

Giles. O, as for that, I believe you; but you see the gudgeon would not bite, as I told you a bit ago, you know: we farmers never love to reap what we don't sow.

Patty. You brutish fellow, how dare you talk——

Giles. So, now she's in her tantarums again, and all for no manner of yearthly thing.

Patty. But be assured my lord will punish you severely for daring to make free with his name.

Giles. Who made free with it? Did I ever mention my lord? 'Tis a cursed lie.

Theo. Bless me! farmer!

Giles. Why it is, Miss—and I'll make her prove her words—Then what does she mean by being punished? I am not afraid of nobody, nor beholding to nobody, that I know of; while I pays my rent, my money, I believe, is as good as another's: egad, if it goes there, I think there be those that deserve to be punished more than I.

Patty. Was ever unfortunate creature pursued as I am, by distresses and vexations!

Theo. My dear Patty—See, farmer, you have thrown her into tears—Pray be comforted. [Exit Giles.]

A I R.

Patty. Oh leave me, in pity! The falsehood I scorn;
For slander the bosom untainted defies;
But rudeness and insult are not to be borne,
Tho' offer'd by wretches we've sense to despise.

Of woman defenceless, how cruel the fate!
 Pass ever so cautious, so blameless her way,
 Ill-nature and envy lurk always in wait,
 And innocence falls to their fury a prey. [*Ex.*]

Enter Mervin.

Theo. You are a pretty gentleman, are you not, to suffer a lady to be at a rendezvous before you?

Mer. Difficulties, my dear, and dangers—None of the company had two suits of apparel; so I was obliged to purchase a rag of one, and a tatter from another, at the expence of ten times the sum they would fetch at the paper-mill.

Theo. Well, where are they?

Mer. Here, in this bundle——and tho' I say it, a very decent habiliment, if you have art enough to stick the parts together: I've been watching till the coast was clear to bring them to you.

Theo. Let me see—I'll slip into this closet and equip myself—All here is in such confusion, there will no notice be taken.

Mer. Do so; I'll take care nobody shall interrupt you in the progress of your metamorphosis [*she goes in*]—and if you are not tedious, we may walk off without being seen by any one.

Theo. Ha! ha! ha!—What a concourse of atoms are here? tho', as I live, they are a great deal better than I expected.

Mer. Well, pray make haste; and don't imagine yourself at your toilette now, where mode prescribes two hours, for what reason would scarce allow three minutes.

Theo. Have patience—the outward garment is on already; and I'll assure you a very good stuff, only a little the worse for mending.

Mer. Imagine it embroidery, and consider it as your wedding suit.—Come, how far are you got?

Theo. Say, you don't consider there's some contrivance necessary—Here goes the apron, flounced and furbelowed with a witness—Alas! alas! it has no strings! what shall I do? Come, no matter, a couple of pins will serve—And now the cap—oh, mercy! here's a hole in the crown of it large enough to thrust my head through.

Mer. That you'll hide with your straw hat; or, if you should not——What, not ready yet?

Theo.

Theo. Only one minute more—Yes, now the work's accomplished.

Enter Theodosia.

A I R.

Who'll buy good luck, who'll buy
The gypsey's favours? — Here am I!
Through the village, through the town,
What charming sav'ry scraps we'll earn!
Clean straw shall be our beds of down,
And our withdrawing-room a barn.
Young and old, and grave and gay,
The miser and the prodigal;
Cit, courtier, bumpkin, come away;
I warrant we'll content you all.

Enter Fairfield, and Giles.

Mer. Plague, here's somebody coming.

Fairf. As to the past, farmer, 'tis past; I bear no malice for any thing thou hast said.

Giles. Why, Master Fairfield, you do know I had a great regard for Miss Patty; but when I came to consider all in all, I finds as how it is not adviseable to change my condition yet awhile.

Fairf. Friend Giles, thou art in the right; marriage is a serious point, and can't be considered too warily.—Ha, who have we here! — Shall I never keep my house clear of these vermin? — Look to the goods there, and give me a horse-whip—by the lord Harry, I'll make an example—Come here, lady Light fingers, let me see what thou hast stolen.

Mer. Hold, miller, hold!

Fairf. O gracious goodness! sure I know this face—Miss—young Madam Sycamore——Mercy heart here's a disguise!

Theo. Discover'd!

Mer. Miller, let me speak to you.

Theo. What ill fortune is this!

Giles. Ill fortune —— Mefs! I think there be nothing but crosses and misfortunes of one kind or other.

Fairf. Money to me, sir! not for the world; you want no friends but what you have already——Lack-a-day, lack-a-day—see how luckily I came in: I believe you are the gentleman to whom I am charged to give this, on the part of my lord Aimworth.—Bless you, dear sir, go up to his honour, with my young lady——There is a chaise

chaise waiting at the door to carry you ——— I and my daughter will take another way. [Exit.

Mer. Pr'ythee read this letter,

Theo. Heavens, 'tis a letter from lord Aimworth! — We are betray'd.

Mer. By what means I know not.

Theo. I am so frightened and flurried, that I have scarce strength enough to read it.

Mer. Well! what do you think of it? ——— Shall we go to the castle?

Theo. By all means: and in this very trim; to show what we were capable of doing, if my father and mother had not come to reason. ——— But hark you, Mervin, will you take after my father, and be a very husband now? — Or don't you think I shall take after my mother, and be a commanding wife!

Mer. Oh, I'll trust you.

Theo. But you may pay for your confidence. [Exit.

Giles. So, there goes a couple! Icod, I believe Old Nick has got among the people in these parts. This is as queer a thing as ever I heard of. ——— Master Fairfield and Miss Patty, it seems, are gone to the castle too; where, by what I larns from Ralph in the mill, my lord has promised to get her a husband among the servants. Now in case the wind sets in that corner, I have been thinking with myself who the plague it can be: there are no unmarried men in the family, that I do know of, excepting little Bob the postilion, and master Jonathan the butler; and he's a matter of sixty or seventy years old. I'll be shot if it beant little Bob. ——— Icod, I'll take the way to the castle, as well as the rest; for I'd fain see how the nail do drive. It is well I had wit enough to discern things, and a friend to advise with, or else she would have fallen to my lot. ——— But I have got a surfeit of going a courting, and burn me if I won't live a batchelor; for, when all comes to all, I see nothing but ill blood and quarrels among folk when they are married.

A I R.

Then hey for a frolicsome life!

I'll ramble where pleasures are rife:

Strike up with the free-hearted lasses;

And never think more of a wife.

Plague on it, men are but asses,

To run after noise and strife.

Had

THE MAID OF

Had we been together buckl'd ;

'T would have prov'd a fine affair :

Dogs would have bark'd at the cuckold ;

And boys, pointing, cry'd—look there. [*Ex.*

SCENE, *a grand Apartment in Lord Aimworth's House, opening to a View of the Garden.*

Enter Lord Aimworth, Fairfield, Patty, and Ralph.

L. Aim. Thus, Master Fairfield, I hope I have fully satisfied you with regard to the falsity of the imputation thrown upon your daughter and me——

Fairf. My lord, I am very well content ; pray do not give yourself the trouble of saying any more.

Ralph. No, my lord, you need not say any more.

Fairf. Hold your tongue, sirrah.

L. Aim. I am sorry, Patty, you have had this mortification.

Patty. I am sorry, my lord, you have been troubled about it ; but really it was against my consent.

Fairf. Well, come, children, we will not take up his honour's time any longer ; let us be going towards home——Heaven prosper your lordship ; the pray'rs of me and my family shall always attend you.

L. Aim. Miller, come back——Patty, stay——

Fairf. Has your lordship any thing further to command us ?

L. Aim. Why yes, Master Fairfield, I have a word or two still to say to you——In short, though you are satisfied in this affair, I am not ; and you seem to forget the promise I made you, that, since I had been means of losing your daughter one husband, I would find her another.

Fairf. Your honour is to do as you please.

L. Aim. What say you, Patty, will you accept of a husband of my chusing ?

Patty. My lord, I have no determination ; you are the best judge how I ought to act ; whatever you command, I shall obey.

L. Aim. Then, Patty, there is but one person I can offer you—and I wish, for your sake, he was more deserving——Take me——

Patty. Sir !

L. Aim. From this moment our interests are one, as our hearts ; and no earthly power shall ever divide us.

Fairf. Patty—my lord—Did I hear right !——You, sir, you marry a child of mine !

L. Aim.

L. Aim. Yes, my honest old man, in me you behold the husband designed for your daughter; and I am happy that, by standing in the place of fortune, who has alone been wanting to her, I shall be able to set her merit in a light, where its lustre will be rendered conspicuous.

Fairf. But good, noble sir, pray consider; don't go to put upon a silly old man: my daughter is unworthy—Patty, child, why don't you speak?

Patty. What can I say, father! what answer, to such unlook'd-for, such unmerited, such unbounded generosity!

Ralph. Down on your knees, and fall a crying.

Patty. Yes, sir, as my father says, consider—your noble friends, your relations—It must not, cannot be—

A I R.

L. Aim. My life, my joy, my blessing!
In thee, each grace possessing,
All must my choice approve:

Patty. To you my all is owing;
O! take a heart o'erflowing
With gratitude and love.

L. Aim. Thus infolding,

Patty. Thus beholding,

Both. One to my soul so dear:
Can there be pleasure greater!
Can there be bliss compleater!
'Tis too much to bear.

Enter Sir Harry, Lady Sycamore, Thedofia, and Mervin.

Sir Har. Well, we have followed your lordship's counsel, and made the best of a bad market—So, my lord, please to know our son-in-law, that is to be.

L. Aim. You do me a great deal of honour—I wish you joy, sir, with all my heart.—And now, Sir Harry, give me leave to introduce to you a new relation of mine——This, sir, is shortly to be my wife.

Sir Har. My lord!

La. Syc. Your lordship's wife!

L. Aim. Yes, madam.

La. Syc. And why so, my lord?

L. Aim. Why, faith ma'am, because I can't live happy without her——And I think she has too many amiable, too many estimable qualities to meet with a worse fate.

Sir Har. Well, but you are a peer of the realm; you will have all the fleecers——

L. Aim.

L. Aim. I know very well the ridicule that may be, throw on a lord's marrying a miller's daughter, and I own, with blushes, is has for some time had too great weight with me: but we should marry to please ourselves, not other people: and, on mature consideration, I can see no reproach justly merited, by raising a deserving woman to a station she is capable of adorning, let her birth be what it will.

Sir Har. Why 'tis very true, my lord. I once knew a gentleman that married his cook-maid: he was a relation of my own—You remember fat Margery, my lady! She was a very good sort of a woman, indeed she was, and made the best suet dumplings I ever tasted.

La. Syc. Will you never learn, Sir Harry, to guard your expressions? ——— Well, but give me leave, my lord, to say a word to you ——— There are other ill consequences attending such an alliance.

L. Aim. One of them I suppose is, that I, a peer, should be obliged to call this good old miller father-in-law. But where's the shame in that? He is as good as any lord, in being a man; and if we dare suppose a lord that is not an honest man, he is, in my opinion, the more respectable character. Come, Master Fairfield, give me your hand; from henceforth you have done with working; we will pull down your mill, and build you a house in the place of it; and the money I intended for the portion of your daughter, shall now be laid out in purchasing a commission for your son.

Ralph. What, my lord, will you make me a captain?

L. Aim. Ay, a colonel, if you deserve it.

Ralph. Then I'll keep Fan.

Enter Giles.

Giles. Ods bobs, where am I running—I beg pardon for my audacity.

Ralph. Hip, farmer; come back, mon, come back—Sure my lord's going to marry sister himself; feyther's to have a fine house, and I'm to be a captain.

L. Aim. Ho, Master Giles, pray walk in; here is a lady who, I dare swear, will be glad to see you, and give orders that you shall always be made welcome.

Ralph. Yes, farmer, you'll always be welcome in the kitchen.

L. Aim. What, have you nothing to say to your old acquaintance ——— Come, pray let the farmer salute you ——— — Nay, a kiss—I insist upon it.

Sir Har. Ha, ha, ha,—hem!

La. Syc.

La. Syc. Sir Harry, I am ready to sink at the monstrousness of your behaviour.

L. Aim. Fie, Master Giles, don't look so sheepish; you and I were rivals, but not less friends at present. You have acted in this affair like an honest Englishman, who scorned even the shadow of dishonour, and thou shalt sit rent-free for a twelvemonth.

Sir Har. Come, sha'n't we all salute——With your leave, my lord, I'll——

La. Syc. Sir Harry!

A I R.

L. Aim. Yield who will to form's a martyr,
While, unaw'd by idle shame,
Pride for happiness I barter,
Heedless of the millions' blame.
Thus with love my arms I quarter;
Women grac'd in nature's frame,
Ev'ry privilege, by charter,
Have a right from man to claim.

Theo. Eas'd of doubts and fears presaging,
What new joys within me rise!
While mama, her frowns assuaging,
Dares no longer tyrannize.
So long and tempests raging,
When the blust'ring fury dies,
Ah! how lovely, how engaging,
Prospects fair and cloudless skies!

Sir Har. Dad, but this is wond'rous pretty,
Singing each a roun-de-lay;
And I'll mingle in the ditty,
Tho' I scarce know what to say.
There's a daughter brisk and witty;
Here's a wife can wisely sway:
Trust me, masters, 'twere a pity,
Not to let them have their way.

Patty. My example is a rare one;
But the cause may be divin'd:
Women want not merit——dare one
Hope discerning men to find.
O! may each accomplish'd fair one,
Bright in person, sage in mind,
Viewing my good fortune, share one
Full as splendid, and as kind.

54 THE MAID OF THE MILL.

Giles. Laugh'd at, slighted, circumvented,
And expos'd for folks to see't,
'Tis as tho'f a man repented
For his follies in a sheet.
But my wrongs go unresented,
Since the fates have thought them meet :
This good company contented,
All my wishes are complete.

THE END.



